Numb. CXLIV.

The GUARDIAN.

Sua cuique quum ſit animi cogitatio,
Colorque privus———— Phædr.

Wedneſday, Auguſt 26. 1713.

IT is a very juſt, and a common Obſervation upon the Natives of this iſland, that in their different Degrees, and in their ſeveral Profeſſions and Employments, they abound as much, and perhaps more, in good Senſe, than any People; and yet, at the ſame time, there is ſcarce an *Engliſhman* of any Life and Spirit, that has not ſome odd Caſt of Thought, ſome Original Humour, that diſtinguiſhes him from his Neighbour. Hence it is, that our Comedies are enriched with ſuch a Diverſity of Characters, as is not to be ſeen upon any other Theatre in *Europe*. Even in the Maſquerades that have been lately given to the Town (though they are Diverſions we are not accuſtomed to) the Singularities of Dreſs were carried much farther than is uſual in Foreign Countries, where the Natives are trained up, as it were, from their Infancy, to thoſe Amuſements. The very ſame Meaſure of Underſtanding, the very ſame Accompliſhments, the very ſame Defects, ſhall, amongſt us, appear under a quite different Aſpect in one Man, to what they do in another. This makes it as impracticable to Foreigners to enter into a thorough Knowlege of the *Engliſh*, as it would be to learn the *Chineſe* Language, in which there is a different Character for every individual Word. I know not how to explain this Vein of Humour ſo obvious in my Countrymen better, than by comparing it to what the *French* call *Le gout de terroir* in Wines; by which they mean the different Flavour one and the ſame Grape ſhall draw from the different Soils in which it is planted. This National Mark is viſible amongſt us in every Rank and Degree of Men, from the Perſons of the firſt Quality and Politeſt Senſe, down to the rudeſt and moſt ignorant of the People. Every Mechanick has a peculiar Caſt of Head, and a Turn of Wit, or ſome uncommon Whim, as a Characteriſtick, that diſtinguiſhes him from others of his Trade, as well as from the Multitudes, that are upon a Level with him. We have a Small-Coal Man, who from beginning with two plain Notes, which make up his daily Cry, has made himſelf Maſter of the whole Compaſs of the Gammut, and has frequent Conſorts of Muſick at his own Houſe for the Entertainment of himſelf and his Friends. There is a Perſon of great Hoſpitality, who lives in a Plaiſtered Cottage upon the Road to *Hampſtead*, and gets a Superfluity of Wealth, by accommodating Holiday Paſſengers with Ale, Brandy, Pipes, Tobacco, Cakes, Ginger-bread, Apples, Pears, and other ſmall Refreſhments of Life; and on Worky-days takes the Air in his Chaiſe, and recreates himſelf with the elegant Pleaſures of the *Beaumonde*. The ſhining Men amongſt our Mob, dignified by the Title of *Ring-leaders*, have an inexhauſtible Fund of Archneſs and

(Price Two Pence.)

and Raillery; as likewiſe have our Sailors and Watermen. Our very Street Beggars are not without their peculiar *Oddities*, as the School-men term them. The other Day a tattered Wag followed me a croſs the *Meuſe*, with *One Farthing or Half-penny, good your Honour; do your Honour; and I ſhall make bold to pray for you.*

Shakeſpear (who was a great Copier of Nature) whenever he introduces any Artiſans, or low Characters into his Plays, never fails to daſh them ſtrongly with ſome diſtinguiſhing Stain of Humour, as may be ſeen more remarkably in the Scene of the Grave makers in *Hamlet*.

Though this Singularity of Temper, which runs through the Generality of us, may make us ſeem whimſical to Strangers; yet it furniſhes out a perpetual Change of Entertainment to our ſelves, and diverſifies all our Converſations with ſuch a variety of Mirth, as is not to be met with in any other Country. Sir *William Temple*, in his Eſſay upon Poetry, endeavours to account for the *Britiſh* Humours, in the following Manner:

'This may proceed from the Native Plenty of 'our Soil, the Unequalneſs of our Climate, as well 'as the Eaſe of our Government, and the Liberty 'of profeſſing Opinions and Factions, which per'haps our Neighbours have about them, but are 'forced to diſguiſe, and thereby may come in time 'to be extinguiſhed. Thus we come to have more 'Originals, and more that appear what they are: 'We have more Humour, becauſe every Man fol'lows his own, and takes a Pleaſure, perhaps a 'Pride, to ſhew it. On the contrary, where the 'People are generally poor, and forced to hard 'Labour, their Actions and Lives are all of a Piece: 'Where they ſerve hard Maſters, they muſt follow 'their Examples, as well as Commands, and are 'forced upon Imitation in ſmall Matters, as well 'as Obedience in great: So that ſome Nations look 'as if they were caſt all by one Mould, or cut out 'all by one Pattern, (at leaſt the common People in 'one, and the Gentlemen in another): They ſeem 'all of a Sort in their Habits, their Cuſtoms, and 'even their Talk and Converſation, as well as in 'the Application and Purſuit of their Actions and 'their Lives. — Beſides all this, there is another 'Sort of Variety amongſt us, which ariſes from 'our Climate, and the Diſpoſitions it naturally pro'duces. We are not only more unlike one another, 'than any Nation I know; but we are more un'like our ſelves too, at ſeveral Times, and owe 'to our very Air ſome ill Qualities, as well as ma'ny good.

Ours is the only Country, perhaps, in the whole World, where every Man, rich and poor, dares to have a Humour of his own, and to avow it upon all Occaſions. I make no doubt, but that it is to this great Freedom of Temper, and this unconſtrained manner of Living, that we owe, in a great Meaſure, the Number of ſhining *Genius's*, which riſe up amongſt us from time to time, in the ſeveral Arts and Sciences, for the Service and for the Ornament of Life. This frank and generous Diſpoſition in a People, will likewiſe never fail to keep up in their Minds an Averſion to Slavery, and be, as it were, a ſtanding Bulwark of their Liberties. So long as ever Wit and Humour continues, and the Generality of us will have their own way of Thinking, Speaking and Acting, this Nation is not like to give any Quarter to an *Invader*, and much leſs to bear with the Abſurdities of *Popery*, in Exchange for an *eſtabliſhed* and a *reaſonable Faith*.

This Paper is to be had of Mr. Yemes *under the* Thatch'd-houſe *Tavern in St.* James's-ſtreet; *Mrs.* Bond *at* Charing-croſs; *Mrs.* Bolter *and Mrs.* Dodd *near the* Temple-gate; *and Mr.* Round *in* Exchange-Ally.

ADVERTISEMENT.

AT the Requeſt of ſeveral Perſons of Quality, who have appointed to meet at the famous Water-Theatre of the late Ingenious Mr. Winſtanly, this Evening at 5 of the Clock, There will be preſented to the Pit and Boxes, an Entertainment of Sweet-Meats, wet and dry, coming out of the Mathematical Barrel, which at the ſame time is crown'd with a Salver of Fruit and Sweet-Flowers, all playing of Water, which a Cupid will alſo preſent: This Night will be added a very delightful part to the 5 parts that are uſually perform'd: There is Sea Gods and Goddeſſes, Nymphs, Mermaids, and Satyrs, with Syrens ſinging upon Rocks, before a great Tempeſt of Thunder and Lightning, with Fire mingling with Water, to the Expence of 300 Tuns extraordinary. Then to conclude all, ſoft Muſick will be heard while Incenſe is burning, and Sweet Flowers playing of Water. Boxes this Night 3s. 6d. Pit 2s. 6d. Firſt Gallery 1s. 6d. Upper Gallery 6d. This is at the lower End of Piccadilly, towards Hide-Park, and is ſhewn for the Benefit of his Widow. And will continue to be ſhewn for ſix Days and no longer, this Seaſon.

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